



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

To be a Learning Enterprise in which **all** Louisiana businesses, institutions, and citizens are **actively** engaged in the pursuit of **knowledge**

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GOAL ONE

OBJECTIVES



- 1.1 To have every child ready to learn by the start of kindergarten
- 1.2 To improve the reading and math skills of every student by high school graduation
- 1.3 To have a highly qualified teacher in every classroom
- 1.4 To have student completion rates approaching 100 percent for Pre -K-12 and post-secondary education
- 1.5 To raise minority achievement levels to close the achievement gap between minorities and whites at all levels of education
- 1.6 To increase student achievement and the number of students completing courses in the following fields: science, engineering, information technology, and entrepreneurship
- 1.7 To fully integrate information technology resources in schools
- 1.8 To have a competitive, efficient, well-integrated system of post-secondary education whose institutions have economic development as a component of their core missions
- 1.9 To make workforce education and technical training programs widely available at the secondary and post-secondary levels
- 1.10 To build a workforce with the education and skills necessary to meet the needs of business in a knowledge-based economy through flexible systems and responsive programs
- 1.11 To increase workforce participation rates among traditionally underutilized sources of workers (women, minorities, disabled, ex-offenders, immigrants, elderly, etc.)

Goal One:

To be a Learning Enterprise in which all Louisiana businesses, institutions, and citizens are actively engaged in the pursuit of knowledge

Objective 1.1 – To have every child ready to learn by the start of kindergarten

Last year the Council for a Better Louisiana (CABL) named universal access to high quality early childhood education as the most important policy initiative Louisiana could engage in as a state to improve our economic viability. Volumes of recently published research lend overwhelming support to CABL's conclusions. It is now clear that early childhood education helps to produce improvements in school attendance and test scores as well as higher college completion rates, higher income levels, and fewer teen pregnancies. By the same token, it is also critical to reducing poverty, crime, and unemployment.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.2 include:

- Percentage of at-risk 4 year olds enrolled in high quality, developmentally appropriate early education classes
- Percentage of childcare centers that are nationally accredited

Objective 1.2 – To improve the reading and math skills of every student by high school graduation

For most of the last century Louisiana has lagged other southern states and the nation as a whole in various measures of student achievement. In order to make Louisiana's workforce fully competitive, to increase participation in postsecondary education, and to foster a statewide climate of intellectual engagement, every high school student must be able to read and compute at higher levels.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.2 include:

- Percentage of Louisiana schools that meet or exceed their biannual School Performance Growth Targets as part of the state's K-12 Accountability Program
- Percentage of 3rd graders who read at or above 3rd grade level at the end of the year based on the statewide reading assessment
- Percentage of 4th graders proficient in reading and math
- Percentage of 8th graders proficient in reading and math
- Percentage of high school students scoring at or above the "Basic" level on the Graduate Exit Exam (LEAP 21) in math, English/language arts, science, and social studies
- Percentage of students who have completed at least one year of algebra by the end of the 10th grade
- Louisiana's average ACT score as a percent of the national ACT average
- Percentage of first time college freshmen taking noncredit (remedial) courses

Objective 1.3 – To have a highly qualified teacher in every classroom

Louisiana's nationally recognized Accountability Program allows policy-makers and educators to identify and focus resources on strengths and weaknesses in our public education system by measuring what students know and are able to do. Studies have repeatedly shown that in order to effectively use these measures to drive improvement, students must have access to highly-qualified, certified teachers. Teacher quality is the single most important link to student achievement. This need is mandated under the new federal "No Child Left Behind" legislation and is critically important given a nationwide teacher shortage that will impact Louisiana and other states around the country.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.3 include:

- Percentage of highly qualified teachers in the classroom (highly qualified based on BESE standards and certified teachers in the classroom)
- Percentage of teachers with major or minor in assigned field, grades 9-12 (math and science)
- The average Louisiana teacher salary (K-12 and higher education)

Objective 1.4- To have student completion rates approaching 100 percent for Pre-K-12 and postsecondary education

Research shows that the social and economic ills plaguing high school dropouts are significantly greater than those of students who attain a diploma. Likewise, those who complete postsecondary programs are more likely to achieve higher incomes and better employment outcomes. It is critical to the development of a more robust workforce for Louisiana to focus on improving completion rates at both the secondary and post-secondary levels.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.4 include:

- Percentage of students in grades 9-12 who drop out each year
- Percentage of 9th graders remaining in school through high school graduation
- First-time, full-time students completing a bachelor's degree within six years

Objective 1.5 - To raise minority achievement levels to close the gap between minorities and whites at all levels of education

Like the rest of the nation, Louisiana experiences disconcerting achievement gaps between students of different races and socio-economic backgrounds. Particularly given Louisiana's large at-risk and minority populations, the state must aggressively focus on effective practices for serving these populations in order to close achievement gaps. This is made more urgent by the "No Child Left Behind" Act which mandates that states close those gaps.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.5 include:

- LEAP scores by race

Objective 1.6 - To increase student achievement and the number of students completing courses in the following fields: science, engineering, information technology, and entrepreneurship.

As technology is growing in importance in nearly every industry and career, it is becoming increasingly important for states to have a workforce that excels in the fields of science, engineering, and information technology. Between 2000 and 2010, jobs in science and engineering occupations are expected to increase at three times the rate for all occupations, according to the National Science Foundation (NSF). Furthermore, technology-intensive jobs pay on average 95 percent more than other jobs (*The Mercedes and the Magnolia, Preparing the Southern Workforce for the Next Economy*, Southern Growth Policies Board, 2002). For state investment purposes, there is also a close link between the number of Ph.D. scientists and engineers that graduate in a state and those that remain and become employed in a state's workforce. Lastly, the most cost-effective job growth often comes from within a state's borders, by passionate, civic-minded entrepreneurs. Louisiana must nurture and encourage entrepreneurial activity by supporting programs that teach the basic skills of starting, operating, and growing a business. Many states are targeting scholarships and funding dollars to increase enrollment and achievement in these fields.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.6 include:

- Science and engineering bachelor degrees awarded per million people as a percentage of the national average
- Percentage of civilian workforce with a recent bachelor's degree in science or engineering
- Number of students completing courses in science, engineering, information technology, and entrepreneurship

Objective 1.7 - To fully integrate information technology resources in schools

In order to effectively prepare a 21st century workforce, students at all levels of education must have significant exposure to technology. Louisiana should seek to integrate the use of technology and information technology processes at all education levels. Training programs must provide teachers with the adequate skills to effectively use technology in the classroom.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.7 include:

- Ratio of students per computer in K - 12
- Percentage of Louisiana schools connected by the equivalent of a T-1 connection or better
- Percentage connected to the Internet2 network (7 public research universities and all other public colleges & universities)

Objective 1.8 - To have a competitive, efficient, well-integrated system of post-secondary education whose institutions have economic development as a component of their core missions

The various postsecondary institutions in Louisiana require clear articulation among technical colleges, community colleges, and universities. Effective articulation makes programs from one institution compatible with courses at others, where there is a similar curriculum. Postsecondary entities must carefully coordinate so that students who choose one level of training and later decide to pursue a higher level in the same line of study can get credit for courses taken.

Universities produce the highly educated graduates needed by many of today's fast growing companies and conduct research and development that may be of use in the private sector. Companies must be able to easily access research, the expertise of the faculty and staff, and specialized, unique equipment. Universities should also work closely with Louisiana companies to aid in recruitment and job placement to help stop the out-migration of highly educated graduates. Universities must embrace economic development as an integral part of their missions and seek innovative ways to tie their expertise into regional business development.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.8 include:

- Percentage of colleges and universities referencing economic development in their mission statements
- Number of students in community colleges transferring to 4-year college/university
- Number of students in high school participating in dual enrollment at a community or technical college
- Percentage of 18-24 year olds enrolling in colleges

Objective 1.9 - To make workforce education and technical training programs widely available at the secondary and post secondary levels

States must raise the importance and awareness of two-year Associate degrees and technical training certifications. It is projected that by 2020, 65 percent of jobs in the United States will require an Associate's degree or advanced training. In 1999 only five percent of high school graduates chose to enter a 2-year college, proprietary school, or apprenticeship. To develop an efficient and effective workforce in Louisiana, students and parents must be educated about workforce needs and opportunities, and workforce preparation and technical training programs must be available for students at all levels.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.9 include:

- Percentage of residents who have received an Associate degree
- Residents earning industry-based certifications

Objective 1.10 - To build a workforce with the education and skills necessary to meet the needs of business in a knowledge-based economy through flexible systems and responsive programs

In a report on the Southern workforce, the Southern Growth Policies Board said that state workforce development systems should be seamless and market-driven. As the economy changes in Louisiana, our workforce courses and programs must prepare graduates to fit market demands and shortages, and also prepare them with the technological skills that are important in the knowledge economy. The private sector must have more input into the system in order for the education courses to better match the needs of industry. Further, programs for workforce training must be flexible enough to respond at the speed of business.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.10 include:

- Percentage of residents, over age 18 with a high school degree or GED equivalent
- Percentage of residents who have graduated from a four-year college or university
- Residents completing training annually through the Incumbent Worker Training Program, Workforce Investment Act programs, and other programs

Objective 1.11 - To increase workforce participation rates among traditionally underutilized sources of workers (women, minorities, disabled, ex-offenders, immigrants, elderly, etc.)

Like the rest of the United States, the South could soon face a workforce crash. Birth rates are falling below replacement levels and, as the Baby Boom generation begins retiring, the South in general, and Louisiana in particular, could be faced with critical labor shortages. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that total labor force growth will drop to 0.7 percent annually between 2000 and 2025, from a rate of 1.1 percent throughout the 1990s. While increasing the education and quality of the overall workforce, we must also fill the gap by engaging traditionally underutilized sources of workers, such as women, minorities, disabled, ex-offenders, immigrants, and the elderly.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 1.11 include:

- Percentage of the civilian labor force that is employed (white, black, Hispanic, women)
- Employment rate for individuals living with disabilities